

people voiced their overwhelming opposition to President Bush's troop escalation plan, our Republican colleagues said, "Give the President time."

The problem is, both the Republican Congress and the Bush administration have been moving the time frame for success on the troop escalation plan. First it was June. Then it was August. Finally, a couple of months ago, Republican leaders agreed that September would be the defining month.

It is clear that President Bush has no intention of ending the troop escalation in Iraq, even though the Iraqi Government has failed to meet the benchmarks that he himself outlined earlier this year. President Bush is determined to leave as many troops in Iraq as possible, no matter what the facts suggest.

The question now is, will Congressional Republicans finally break away from the President and do what is right for this Nation and for the military? Congressional Republicans must realize that the time has come to change course.

MOVING FORWARD AND WINNING PEACE IN IRAQ

(Mr. AKIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. AKIN. Mr. Speaker, for the last year the Democrats have been saying that the war in Iraq is lost and we should pull our troops out, and they were, of course, opposed to the surge. But after hearing from witnesses of every political stripe week after week on the oversight subcommittee, this profound reality became obvious: The least costly and best alternative for America is not to lose. It is to win.

We are more than halfway through the campaign, and it is too costly to quit and to go back. The concept that we can win is novel to Democrats perhaps, who think in top-down solutions in Washington and in Iraq. But our new military strategy is proving successful.

Just as our Nation grew from the bottom up, town by town, State by State, so also federalism shows success in Iraq. Local communities are working closely with our military to curb violence. For this reason, we must ensure that they have the freedom and the autonomy to continue to develop.

The best alternative for America in Iraq is to move forward to win the peace.

□ 1015

CHILDREN DESERVE HEALTH INSURANCE

(Mr. BRALEY of Iowa asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, it is getting harder for American families to make ends meet, especially when it comes to the rising cost of health insurance.

New census data shows that the number of Americans without health insurance nationwide rose by nearly 2 million in 2006. In addition, the number of children without health insurance grew by 700,000 to nearly 8.7 million children. These new numbers mean that one in nine American kids don't have health insurance, including 22 percent of Hispanic children and 14 percent of African American children.

These numbers are appalling for a Nation as wealthy as ours. That is why the Democratic Congress passed the CHAMP Act; to reauthorize the Children's Health Insurance Program for 6 million children and to provide 5 million more children with health insurance, covering a total of 11 million children. But President Bush has threatened to veto this critical bill, despite strong bipartisan support among Congress and Governors.

Mr. Speaker, these new census numbers can't be ignored. It is time to stop playing politics with children's health insurance. It is time for the President to support and sign the CHAMP Act.

WAIT FOR REPORT TO EVALUATE PROGRESS

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, as America awaits word from our military and diplomatic leaders in Iraq early next week, it is apparent to me that many in Congress seem prepared to prejudge our progress and dismiss the report of General David Petraeus even before he makes it.

Many, as has been done here this morning, cite the recent GAO report as a basis for accepting retreat and defeat in Iraq. But as Fred Kagan of the American Enterprise Institute pointed out recently, the mandate of the GAO report was not to evaluate progress broadly defined in Iraq, it was to determine whether or not the Iraqi Government had met 18 benchmarks set by the U.S. Government. Fred Kagan pointed out that the term "Anbar" actually only appears twice in the GAO report, despite the extraordinary progress in the Anbar Province where we have seen Sunni leadership come forward, working with marines, working with the al-Maliki government and defeating terrorism. The so-called "triangle of death" is so safe the President of the United States was able to land there and meet with Sunni and Shia leaders earlier this week.

I think it is imperative that we stand with our soldiers, we wait and hear from our military and diplomatic leaders, and for the purpose of freedom in Iraq and for the purpose of our national honor, we accept nothing short of victory in that nation.

CHAMP ACT CHAMPIONS CHILDREN

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, for a decade now the Children's Health Insurance Program has provided 6 million children access to private health insurance. Thanks to CHIP, every year over the last decade, the number of uninsured children fell. That is until the last 2 years.

Last week, the Census Bureau reported that the number of American children living without health insurance increased from 8 million in 2005 to 8.7 million in 2006. This is simply unacceptable.

I would hope President Bush saw these troubling numbers and finally realized we cannot afford to ignore them any longer. Last month, this Democratic House acted by passing the CHAMP Act, legislation that will allow us to reach an additional 5 million children who are already eligible for the CHIP program.

When CHIP was created back in 1997, it was supported by both Democrats and Republicans. But today, both the White House and the House Republican leadership oppose the CHAMP Act.

Mr. Speaker, the Census Bureau report should serve as a wake-up call to the President to reconsider his veto threat of the CHAMP Act.

AMERICA HONORS HER GOLD STAR MOTHERS

(Mr. ROSKAM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, last month I was humbled and honored to introduce a resolution honoring the goals and ideals of Gold Star Mothers Day. In 1940, FDR designated the last Sunday in September as Gold Star Mothers Day to commemorate the tremendous sacrifice these courageous mothers have endured on behalf of our Nation.

This year Gold Star Mothers Day will be held on September 30. This brave group of women have turned their personal tragedy into patriotism and caring service.

I want to take this opportunity to pay special tribute to Georgette Frank of Elk Grove Village, Illinois. Her son, Phil, enlisted in the Marine Corps right out of high school in response to the September 11 attacks, and paid the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.

Phil believed that the best way to keep America safe was to take the fight to the terrorists. And the last time he saw his mom he said, "Be strong, Mom. No matter what happens, you be strong." That's exactly what Georgette has done.

Phil and his family represent the best and the bravest that our country